



GREAT BRITAIN WHEELCHAIR RUGBY LIMITED

Annual General Meeting

19 September 2018

**MINUTES**

Present: Kevin Aitchison (Chair)  
Richard Allcroft (Director/Trustee)  
Suzy Christopher (Director/Trustee)  
Mary Daunt (Director/Trustee)  
Andrew Flatt (Director/Trustee)  
Simon Le Fevre (Director/Trustee)  
David Pond (CEO)  
Michael Spence (Director/Trustee)

and

12 Members (10 Voting Members and 2 Associate Members)

In attendance: Julie Bunnage GBWR National Development Director  
Paul Arnold GBWR National Development Director  
Daniel Hook GBWR Compliance & Membership Officer  
Rob Tarr GBWR Assistant Coach  
Lee Stutely GBWR Events & Competition Officer  
Lee Parry GBWR Regional Development Officer  
Dale Thompson GBWR Regional Development Officer  
Tom Rogers GBWR Regional Development Officer  
Adam Simmons GBWR Regional Development Officer  
Conor Murphy GBWR Talent Programme Manager  
Louise Satherley GBWR Workforce Development Officer

1. Chair's Opening Address

1.1 The Chair welcomed Members to the AGM and thanked everyone for coming. He said there had been one item received under AOB but he encouraged questions during the meeting on any aspect of the presentations and said that if there was anything the team was unable to answer immediately they would take it away and come back with a response outside of the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 Apologies were received from: Justin Frishberg, Margaret Moore, Stuart McLindon, Allan Smith, Catriona Brown, John Colgan, Sue Coombs, Lyn Strong, Paul Shaw.



2.2 The meeting noted that 29 Proxies had been received from Members unable to attend the AGM in person.

2.3 The Chair confirmed that the meeting was therefore quorate.

3. Minutes of the AGM dated 21 November 2017

3.1 There being no changes proposed, the minutes of the 2017 GBWR AGM were approved.

Proposed: Steve Palmer

Seconded: Bob O'Shea

4. Actions Arising

4.1 There were no actions arising.

5. Chair's Annual Report

5.1 The Chair began by repeating the JF Kennedy quote about change, which the CEO had used as the sub-heading to his annual report. He said that the pace of change quickened every year and that it was often a struggle to keep up. He said the same applied in sport and that in recent years even our traditional games had changed or new disciplines had evolved such as 100 over cricket. Wheelchair Rugby was no different, he said, and this year the introduction of WR5s had opened the sport up to new people; but with it came new challenges. The Chair moved on to talk about the financial challenge since the loss of UK Sport funding. He congratulated the CEO for the successful way in which he had raised income through sponsorship and he thanked all of those who were supporting the fundraising efforts. He then spoke about the enormous task involved in ensuring the organisation's governance was robust. He said the task was massive and thanked all of those who were engaged in ensuring our compliance and procedures were robust.

5.2 In posing the question: "so how are we doing?", the Chair said: "it's all about people". The sport's development over the year had gone well and that was because of a good team. Kirsty Clarke had done a brilliant job as the previous NDD and Julie Bunnage and Paul Arnold had hit the ground running as her successors and there had been a seamless transition. The RDO's and volunteers continued to perform well. The GB National Team had also embraced the new funding reality and had enjoyed a good year, the highlight being winning the European Championships. He thanked everyone for all they were doing for the sport and made particular mention of his Board colleagues who, he said, had ever increasing responsibilities on the governance and compliance front which they willingly undertook.

5.3 Looking ahead the Chair said the Board was focused on 3 key priorities. First: fundraising. He said GBWR was the envy of other sports for the success achieved over the last 2 years, but that still more funding was required to maintain the GB National Team and the broader sport; so this was always going to be a challenge. Second: governance. He said that the ever growing demands required constant attention; and he thanked Simon Le Fevre in particular for the large amount of time he gave freely to support the CEO with this work. Finally: succession planning. This, he said,



was now assuming a greater priority as Board Directors/Trustees were stepping down over the next 2 years, as they were coming to the end of their permitted service time.

## 6.0 CEO's Report

6.1 The CEO reminded Members that the full Annual Report and Financial Statements for the 2017/18 financial year were available on the GBWR website. He began by thanking all of those who had made the effort to attend the AGM and those at home who had submitted proxy votes. He said that he would cover some key points in his presentation, but that he would leave the GB Assistant Coach and National Development Directors to provide more of the detail. In summarising the year, the CEO commented that, over the previous 12 months, GBWR had:

- continued to provide more opportunities for more people to play wheelchair rugby and increased both our membership and number of clubs;
- launched Wheelchair Rugby 5s as a new discipline of the sport;
- partnered with the Lord's Taverners charity to provide the 'Lord's Taverners Wheelchair Rugby Junior Programme';
- retained the European Championship gold medal;
- staged the King Power Quad Nations international tournament in Leicester;
- built on the success of the 1st4Sport Coaching Qualification;
- achieved initial compliance with 'The Code for Sports Governance';
- supported the Stonewall Rainbow Laces and This Girl Can campaigns;
- achieved the Advanced Level of the Standard for Safeguarding & Protection of Children in Sport;
- generated over £330,000 from fundraising and sponsorship and a further £125,000 in support of the King Power Quad Nations Tournament;
- established a new Talent Programme; and
- increased work in Wales.

6.2 The CEO said there were still areas where he felt we could do better and, in particular, he said that: reaching out to under-represented groups; the recruitment and training of new referees and classifiers; the development of a volunteer strategy; and yet more work to achieve new income streams; were all areas he wanted to progress over the coming year.

6.3 The challenges ahead were still significant, the CEO said, and in particular he focused on 4 areas:

- resources – people and cash;
- increased scrutiny – compliance; governance; safeguarding;
- succession planning for the Board and Senior Staff; and
- GB podium success.

6.4 He concluded by thanking everyone who supported the sport, especially the volunteers, sponsors and fundraisers, all of the staff and, finally, the Board who, he said, provided him with good advice and support over and above their remits.



## 7. National Development Directors' Reports

7.1 Julie Bunnage began by lifting the audience with a list of those for whom 2017-18 had been a highlight year – Leicester Tigers, who had won Division 1 of the Super Series for the first time; Ospreys, who had won the Junior Nationals; Yorkshire Lions, who were the winners of the Shield; Newcastle, who were the newest club to join the NGB; Burn, who had won Division 2 of the Super Series; all of those who had become qualified coaches by undertaking the Level 2 course; the 45 people who had passed the 'Safe Session' course; all of those who had taken part in the new WR5s; and the Brighton Buccaneers who, in their first year of the sport, had come second in the League. She said that there had been some amazing achievements over the year and she thanked all of the staff and volunteers for their hard work and acknowledged her predecessor Kirsty Clarke, who had led the development work for most of the year.

7.2 Paul Arnold continued the theme and said that numbers joining the sport had continued to grow in 2017/18, and that Newcastle and Berkshire were the latest clubs to evolve. He said that Louise Satherley had developed a workforce strategy, and a key component of this was to increase the number of active officials. Coach numbers were continuing to grow, with 9 qualifying over the year and 20 registered for the next course. He said that this would bring the total number of qualified coaches to 50. He then spoke about WR5s, congratulating Adam Simmons on the magnificent work he had done to get this new discipline off the ground. He said there was still lots of learning and that the staff team was reviewing feedback from the first year, and will be looking to implement some small changes as a result. He expected the competition to continue to grow, as interest remained very high. Next he commented on the Lord's Taverners Junior Programme which, he said, had gone well. The partnership with Lord's Taverners would be reviewed in the spring of 2019, and he hoped it would continue. He then spoke about the establishment of the Membership database which, he said, was now live, and would be a valuable asset to members and the staff. Finally he thanked everyone for supporting across the sport.

## 8. Head Coach

8.1 Assistant GB Coach, Rob Tarr, presented the report on behalf of Head Coach, Paul Shaw. Rob Tarr covered the main tournaments over the year:

- Quad Nations - He said this tournament was a great experience for the team to play in front of a home crowd. He said it was the first time the GB National Team had played at this level since 2016. It was also an opportunity to develop the squad and to introduce Aaron Phipps and Stuart Robinson into the mix. The strategy had been to target the USA in particular, and GB won the pool game against them; but the USA went on to win the tournament.
- Japan Para Games - The focus here was squad development and to use the tournament as an opportunity to develop new lines. GB defeated Japan in the group stage; but Japan went on to win the tournament.
- World Championships - This, he said, was the big one. The team were sharp, and preparation had been good. There had been a strong game plan and it had worked well right up until the semi-final. The match against Australia had been the best performance by a GB team for many years. It was a confidence booster and GB had narrowly lost by 2 points.



- The bronze medal match versus the USA had proved one match too many. It was a disappointing finish to the tournament, as the team did not seem able to raise their game to that which had been seen in the match against Australia.
- Finally, the coach said that he was positive about where the team is going. In Rio the conversion rate had been 76%, but that this had now improved to 89%; and GB was now recognised as 4<sup>th</sup> in the world, even though (because of the recent IWRF changes) they were still currently ranked 5<sup>th</sup>.

8.2 Looking ahead, he commented that it was important to continue to play the top teams if GB were to have any chance of the podium. He spoke about the proposed programme for 2019, which included: Quad Nations, the USA, European Championships and WWRC19. He thanked the clubs and Domestic Management Group (DMG) for supporting the GB programme, all club coaches who were also helping to support the coaching strategy, the volunteers who support the programme, the sponsors and the CEO for all his personal energy to keep the programme alive.

## 9. International Report

9.1 The Chair opened this item by congratulating Richard Allcroft on his recent election as President of the IWRF. Richard thanked the Chair and then summarised the international activity over the year. In summary:

- the Quad Nations had been used as an opportunity for a Classification Conference, which allowed nations to report the practices and work going on around the world and to focus on key aspects such as achieving consistency; and
- a number of key people had been engaged over the year. He said the CEO had met key 2019 WWRC and 2020 Paralympic Games officials in Japan. John Timms had been working hard with international representatives on competitions, and Jim Roberts had been active in the Athletes Council.

9.2 Looking ahead, Richard reported that Japan was looking to use the 2020 Games as a tool to increase accessibility in the country, and to bring disability into the public eye in a positive way. He said that broadcasters in Japan were already providing a one hour slot each day to show Paralympic sport – this was very impressive, as there was still 2 years to go. He said there would be a 2020 Test Event in Q1 of 2020.

9.3 He finished by speaking about the international challenges for GB. He said it would also be important to introduce more GB people into the international environment. As always, funding would be the key and, whilst the NGB was funded by UK Sport for international influence activities for the next 2 years, the strategy for accessing any future funding was not known.

## 10. Resolutions

10.1 Resolution 1.

**THAT the accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2018 together with the reports of the Trustees and auditors be received.**

Proposed: Steve Palmer



Seconded: Bob O'Shea

For: 35, Against: 0, Abstained: 3      **Resolution Carried**

10.2 Resolution 2.

**THAT Mazars, Tower Bridge House, St Katherine's Way London E1W 1DD be re-appointed as the Company's Auditors, to hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.**

Proposed: Craig Streeter

Seconded: Brian Pritchard

For: 34, Against: 0, Abstained 3      **Resolution Carried**

10.3 Resolution 3.

**THAT Mr Michael Spence MBE be re-elected as a Trustee & Director for a term of up to 3 years.**

Proposed: Rob Tarr

Seconded: Bob O'Shea

For: 35, Against: 0, Abstained: 3      **Resolution Carried**

11. AOB

11.1 The Chair reported that one item of AOB had been received from Justin Frishberg, who was unable to be present at the meeting. This question, with the Board's response (which would be forwarded to Justin), is recorded below:

11.2 **Question from Justin Frishberg**

The rules for the 2018 AGM have been changed to make it harder for members to bring a resolution for a vote at an AGM. I would like to discuss with the meeting a) why this change was made, and b) how a change of this nature can be made without consultation with the membership ?

**Response**

In 2015 Farrer's, GBWR's then legal advisers, pointed out that, under company law, any Members' resolution to be proposed for a vote at an Annual General Meeting has to be requested by at least 5% of the company's voting members. These relevant procedures are – as Farrers pointed out – matters of underlying company law, and not matters which appear in the GBWR Articles.

This clarification, regarding the procedure for any members' resolution, was accordingly added into the Calling Notice for the 2015 GBWR AGM. Since then, exactly the same procedure has been set out for GBWR's Annual General Meetings in 2016, 2017 and 2018.



GBWR is, thus adhering to the percentage threshold established by company law and no change has been made to the procedure in 2018.

- 11.3 Simon Le Fevre addressed the meeting about succession planning. He said that it was important to draw in new Board Directors/Trustees as positions became vacant. All posts will be advertised on the website. He then explained the various ways in which people can get to serve on the Board and the difference between the Elected and Appointed positions, and the skills requirements. He also said that the Board was committed to supporting Members with appropriate training for board positions. He also noted that his presentation would be posted on the GBWR website for reference.
- 11.4 The Chair asked if there were any final questions and, as there were none, he again thanked everyone for coming and, there being no further business, the meeting closed.

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Kevin Aitchison  
Chair of Trustees  
GBWR